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S.E.A.L.I.F.T

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND



GRASP TOWS NR-1

MSC plays pivotal role in famous sub's final days

Article and photos
Pg. 4

INSIDE — MSC, RFA share experience through exchange program

CIVMARs offered a level playing field and new opportunities

“All things being equal” is a phrase we hear from time to time. It means everyone has an equal shot at something — that the playing field is level. It’s a condition that we’ve been working on for MSC’s civil service mariners for quite a while. All that work is finally paying off as a total modernization of the CIVMAR promotion evaluation system is being phased in.

Recognizing performance

We all get evaluated in one way or another, even admirals. It’s frustrating to do your job well and then get a poor evaluation because your evaluator doesn’t write well, or doesn’t have specific job tasks to compare your performance against.

It’s also frustrating to get a poor evaluation and not have a chance to insert your own comments on why you don’t think it accurately assesses your capabilities and skills. That’s why we’re implementing this new system.

An article in the December edition of Sealift explained the mechanics of the new program — how it will replace the old, written-on-paper system with an automated, electronic file that won’t get lost or torn. The article also went into detail on how concrete performance criteria were being developed for each CIVMAR position, from master to ordinary seaman and from chief engineer to wiper.

These performance criteria are also associated with leadership and management skills where appropriate. And, as part of the evaluation, you get to review it and comment on it before it becomes a permanent part of your official record.

Capt. Charles Becker, a CIVMAR master; Kathleen Giacalone, a human

resources division director at Military Sealift Fleet Support Command, and their team have spent a great deal of time developing and refining the new system, and I like what they’ve accomplished. The new system was phased in for masters in December to begin the verification process that will make sure we’re doing it right.

So far, 16 masters’ evaluations have been completed. Toward the end of the year, the new automated system will be deployed to the total CIVMAR workforce in phases. Keeping our CIVMAR force at full strength, with competent, motivated people, is one of my top goals and has been since I arrived at MSC.

This new system will give our CIVMARs a chance to go after promotions and jobs knowing that they’re being evaluated against the same set of criteria as everyone else competing with them for that job or promotion opportunity. That’s a big step forward in taking care of our people.

Providing opportunity

It’s long been my policy to afford CIVMARs training opportunities to beef up their professional knowledge and skills. It broadens their career possibilities. It builds a better workforce for the command.

MSFSC already administers a non-degree unlicensed-to-licensed upgrade program. Now we’re going a step further. Last month I signed COMSC Instruction 12410.4, Unlicensed to Licensed Mariner Degree Program. This is where opportunity really begins knocking on the door for a good number of our people.

Do you have a college bachelor’s

degree or a U.S. Coast Guard license equivalent to a third mate or third assistant engineer? If you don’t, it’s hard to get one or the other without attending a maritime college. That means time away from a paying job at a school where you spend money instead of making it — not something anyone wants to contemplate in today’s economy.

But, how do you get ahead, then? How do you make the jump shift to a licensed position?

The CIVMAR Unlicensed to Licensed Degree Program may be the answer for you.

If you have three years of seagoing experience with MSC and don’t hold a bachelor’s degree or higher from any accredited college or university, then here’s what you need to do if you want to make the change from unlicensed to licensed.

First, you’ve got to apply to and be accepted by one of the following maritime academies: California Maritime, Great Lakes Maritime, Maine Maritime, Massachusetts Maritime, State University of New York Maritime or Texas A&M Maritime. Then you’ve got to submit a complete application package to MSFSC. You can find all the requirements for this package in the instruction. We’ll screen all the submitted packages and choose the very best to participate in this program.

We’ll only have spaces for a maximum of four students at each of the academies. That means that there is an incredible opportunity waiting for 24 unlicensed CIVMARs.

If you are selected, here’s what MSC can do for you — fund the degree pro-

gram, including tuition, sea-term fees, books and other mandatory maritime academy fees.

But, wait, there’s more. Let’s assume you’re really working hard and maintaining both academic and disciplinary standards of the academy and MSC. Then MSC is willing to continue your permanent rate of pay while you’re enrolled, plus a subsistence and housing allowance.

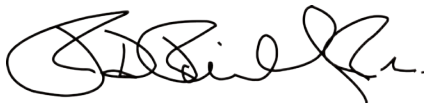
There are a couple of caveats. You’ll have to sign a statement saying that you’ll work for DOD for five years after you graduate. If you fail to maintain grades, thereby failing to graduate, you’ll have to pay us back. The same holds if you leave DOD before the five years is up — you’ll have to pay back some of the training costs associated with your attendance at the academy.

Okay, go back and read the last five paragraphs again. As near as I can tell, it’s a great deal.

So, what are you waiting for? Get a copy of COMSC Instruction 12410.4, and start building your academy application package today. And if you’ve gotten a promotion evaluation under the new system by the time you’re putting your application package together, make sure it’s included. You want your package to be as strong as possible.

Opportunity is knocking!

Keep the faith,



Robert D. Reilly Jr.
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, Military Sealift Command

Swift response

In Panama City, Panama, Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Joe Davies, top left, observes Panamanian National Air and Maritime Service personnel conducting a mass casualty exercise Dec. 22. The exercise was part of Southern Partnership Station, a five-month training mission to Central America, South America and the Caribbean Basin. Military Sealift Command high-speed vessel HSV Swift got underway for the mission in November with embarked Navy, Marine Corps and Naval Criminal Investigative Service training team members and translators. These teams provide instruction to partner nations on a variety of topics, including port security, small-boat maintenance, combat lifesaving and enlisted leadership.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Daniel Ball

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COMSC	Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., USN
Director, Public Affairs	Timothy Boulay
Editor	Rosemary Heiss
Writers	Edward Baxter, Singapore Bill Cook, Norfolk, Va. Susan Melow, Norfolk, Va. Trish Larson, Washington Laura Seal, Washington Meghan Patrick, Washington Gillian Brigham, Naples Sarah Burford, San Diego
Art Director	Dale Allen, Washington
Graphics	Susan Thomas, Washington

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MSC exchanges ideas, experience with British counterpart — Royal Fleet Auxiliary

By Meghan Patrick
MSC Public Affairs

On Jan. 12, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command Workforce Development Director Andrew Kallgren moved from the Norfolk area to Portsmouth, England, where he will serve for two years as the Military Sealift Command's exchange officer to its British counterpart, the United Kingdom's Royal Fleet Auxiliary. The RFA provides afloat logistics support to the Royal Navy, much as MSC provides that support to the U.S. Navy.

The MSC-RFA Personnel Exchange Program, created in 1981, promotes the sharing of knowledge and cooperation among the allied fleet logistics forces by providing a system of mutual exchange of civilian personnel between the two commands.

"Strategically, MSC and RFA are so close in their missions that if either side of our program has an operational or strategic issue, it's helpful to be able to pick up the phone and find out the other's direction on the topic," said Chief Officer Karl Woodfield, RFA's current exchange officer, who started working at MSC headquarters in Washington, D.C., in 2006. "Having accessible representatives on both sides in frequent dialogue is an incredible asset to both organizations."

Representatives from MSC and RFA senior management are eligible to apply for the two- to three-year exchange officer position. Kallgren relieved civil service mariner Susan Orsini — an MSC first officer equivalent to an RFA chief officer — who assumed the position in 2006. Both seafaring civil service mariner officers like Orsini, and civil servants

like Kallgren, who fall under general schedule grade levels GS-13 through GS-15 — or the NSPS equivalents, are eligible to be exchange officers.

The exchange officers facilitate the Afloat Exchange Program, which enables MSC civil service mariners to sail aboard RFA ships and vice versa

sides of the Atlantic will make the importance of a close relationship between RFA and MSC "greater than ever," says Woodfield, who stresses that the organizations must work together to determine the most efficient practices and adopt them accordingly.

Woodfield, whose post in the

U.S. capitol expires in August, says that living in America is an "outstanding life experience" for his family, which includes his wife and three daughters, now ages 6, 8 and 10.

"My job as

a seafarer keeps me away from home most of the time, so the opportunity to live and work in the United States and see my little girls grow up for three years is a precious gift that I will cherish forever," said Woodfield, who notes that he also "enjoys [his] youngest daughter's Virginia accent."

For Kallgren, the chance to live in a different culture with his wife and two young children is "on a personal level, one of the greatest appeals of the program."

Orsini, who served two years with the U.S. Navy before joining MSC as a third officer in 1990, appreciated the chance she had to let her "feet dry out."

"For two years I could invite friends and family to visit me in a house and [in a] community that I felt connected to," she said. "I know that my performance at sea will be forever improved because of the different perspective I was able to see."

To learn more about the MSC-RFA Personnel Exchange Program, contact Theresa Curbello at MSC headquarters' maritime forces and manpower management directorate at (202) 685-5143 or theresa.curbello@navy.mil.



"Having accessible representatives on both sides in frequent dialogue is an incredible asset to both organizations."

Chief Officer Karl Woodfield
Royal Fleet Auxiliary

for four-month stints. The exchange officers also respond to tasking by their host organizations, while collaborating with logistics counterparts from their home commands.

"We look for the current issues that the commands are grappling with to see where we can provide help," Woodfield said. "So much time is saved by consistently sharing information, exploring new questions together and using each other as a benchmark to see if we're going down the most efficient path. This is why the exchange program is enduring."

Orsini agrees that the sharing capability of the program is one of its greatest benefits.

"The opportunity to learn the business aspect of the RFA and how it translates to MSC is something I will always appreciate," said Orsini. "The commands are strategically run by two completely different business models. Because there are many successful ways to conduct business, examining and learning from each other's procedures and policies is a rewarding process."

Tumultuous economies and further pressure on defense budgets on both

Former MSC exchange officers on their experiences with RFA

Retired Chief Engineer Peter Schuffels, 1988-1990:

"If you took away the accents and couldn't look out the window to see where you are, the sister organizations are basically identical. They serve the same purpose. The exchange program is worthwhile because its participants witness the other organization accomplish the same thing in a different style. MSC can learn about the more efficient aspects of RFA's program and vice versa. As the saying goes, the British and Americans are two peoples separated by a common language."

Capt. Edward Nanartowich, 1996-1998:

"There is so much to learn from England's deeply rooted maritime history, which is as old as the island nation itself. The high regard that the English have for mariners is fascinating. A captain shipmaster in the U.K. is of the same stature as a doctor or lawyer in the U.S. Experiencing the British seafaring traditions first-hand, particularly the Royal Navy's, and subsequently, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Force's penchant for professionalism and camaraderie, was an invaluable experience for me and should be for all Americans because it preserves a part of our own history that has been lost and reflects many of the traditions that we have maintained. Both organizations [MSC and RFA] are going through continuous change and refinement. Having a person watch over these changes gives us more of a global outlook as to how MSC as an organization can be recognizable by foreign navies as well as keep up to date with the latest procedures."

Concord, San Jose deliver smiles to kids

By Edward Baxter
SEALOGFE Public Affairs

For Military Sealift Command's combat stores ships, delivering food, clothing and supplies is a normal part of the job. During a December port call to the Philippines, however, the crews of USNS Concord and USNS San Jose delivered something special — smiles to disadvantaged children.

On Dec. 18, 45 civil service mariners and U.S. Navy sailors from Concord and San Jose teamed up to lend a helping hand at the Social Development Center, an orphanage for abused or neglected girls outside Olongapo, the Philippines.

Eighteen volunteers from Concord painted two bedrooms and replaced damaged screens in the center, which serves as a home for 20 girls, ages 4 to 18. The crew also banded together to raise more than \$600 to purchase gifts for the girls as well as school supplies and some clothing. Concord's civil service master Capt. William Riley and Navy Senior Chief Storekeeper Jack Herring presented gift bags to the girls on behalf of the ship.

"During the gift presentation, I overheard several of the girls say that this would be a holiday they would never forget," said Navy Lt. Kenny R. Lee, staff chap-

lain from Ship Support Unit Singapore, who set up the community relations event with the Olongapo mayor's office. "The ship's crew brought the girls smiles, which they returned many times throughout the day."

During a meeting with the school's director, Navy Storekeeper 2nd Class Mordeaci Hawthorne, assigned aboard Concord, saw a blackboard with the name of each girl along with a tale of abandonment or hardship that explained why she was at the center.

"It brought a tear to my eye," Hawthorne said. "So, the project became a little more than just painting walls and fixing things and made me realize that we could really help these kids enjoy the holidays."

Twenty-seven civil service mariners and U.S. Navy sailors from San Jose painted two administrative offices at the school as well as a large activity room. They also provided a lunch of pizza and fried chicken, soft drinks and desserts for the children and the school's staff. San Jose's crew donated more than \$1,500 to purchase gift bags. San Jose's Chief Mate Charlie Portelli and Yeoman Storekeeper Colleen Espinosa presented the gifts to the children.

The girls thanked the crew by hanging large

welcome banners and performing traditional songs and dance.

"I noticed the positive energy from the ship's crew, whether military or civilian," said Portelli. "Everyone worked hard, and the kids seemed very excited we were there."



Ordinary Seaman Jonathan Magante, front, and Able Seaman Rene Vilches from combat stores ship USNS Concord put a fresh coat of paint on the walls of the Olongapo, Philippines' Social Development Center Dec. 18.



A GRASP ON MSC supports M

**By Rosemary Heiss
MSC Public Affairs**

Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp conducted a special mission in December — to tow the U.S. Navy’s one-of-a-kind, nuclear-powered, deep-submergence submarine NR-1 for the final time. The submarine was inactivated in a Nov. 21 ceremony at Submarine Base New London, Conn. For nearly 40 years, the 146-foot-long vessel, with only an 11-passenger capacity, has been used to provide underwater search and recovery, oceanographic research missions, and installation and maintenance of underwater equipment, to a depth of more than half a mile.

Sub significance

Civil service mariner Capt. Jose Delfaus and Grasp’s crew were proud to be a part not only of the first submarine tow by Grasp since its transfer to MSC in January 2006, but also to be part of NR-1’s long and unique history.

First conceived in 1964 by the father of the nuclear Navy, Adm. Hyman Rickover, NR-1 launched in Groton, Conn., Jan. 25, 1969. During its long service, the sub conducted multiple missions to search for artifacts and wrecks and mapped the ocean floor.

One of the submarine’s most noteworthy missions followed the loss of the Space Shuttle Challenger in 1986. Because of its ability to remain on the sea floor without resurfacing frequently, NR-1 was a major tool for searching deep waters. NR-1 remained submerged and on station even when heavy weather and rough seas hit the area and forced all other search and recovery ships into port. The submarine was used to search for, identify and recover critical parts of the Challenger craft.

NR-1 also recovered weapons from the ocean floor in 1976. The vessel discovered three wrecks along the Mediterranean trade route in 1995. In 2002, NR-1 also surveyed the remains of Civil War-era USS Monitor, the Navy’s first

ironclad warship, and USS Akron, a Navy dirigible that crashed in 1933. Its final mission in 2008 was to search for the wreck of Bonhomme Richard, the flagship of naval hero John Paul Jones.

The final tow

Shortly after NR-1’s last mission, Grasp began the task of taking the submarine from Groton to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, to start the inactivation process.

Grasp arrived in Groton Dec. 1. That day, the crews of the MSC ship and the submarine loaded gear for the voyage to Portsmouth. In preparation for the tow, Grasp’s rigid-hull, inflatable boat was lowered into the water to carry the towline and a unique ball coupling used to hook up NR-1.

Grasp’s Deck Machinist Joel Tano, Able Seaman Marlon Andries and two NR-1 crew members were responsible for the hook up. From the RHIB, the four-man team wrestled the ball-coupling device — about 12 inches in diameter, made of steel and weighing more than 100 pounds — into its socket on the front of the submarine.

With the towline in place, Grasp began the two-day tow. Though rough seas plagued the mission, they didn’t hinder the ship’s progress. One thing did however — the towline separated from NR-1.

Civil service mariners had been constantly monitoring the towline via sensors in the tow booth.

“While constant booth monitoring is not mandatory, I sleep better at night knowing it’s watched,” said Delfaus, no stranger to ship towing, as a fleet ocean tug captain from 1999-2005.

“Normally with line deterioration, the break is spread out,” he said. “This one was an anomaly

— a clean break without signs of abrasion or cutting.”

“The RHIB crew did all the work getting us reconnected,” he continued. “We initially lost about four hours, but we made that up once we got back underway. In fact, we had to slow down or risk getting into port too early.”

MSC and NR-1

Just as MSC was instrumental in the last chapter of the submarine’s life, the command has supported the small submersible’s mission for years.

Though NR-1’s last tow was a first for USNS Grasp, the submarine was accustomed to being towed by another MSC ship. The submarine was too slow to travel between job sites on its own, according to Navy Lt. David Nesbitt, an NR-1 crew member who had been with the submarine for five years and was aboard Grasp for NR-1’s final tow.

MSC’s relationship to the unique submarine dates to the mid-1990s when the command chartered submarine support ship MV Carolyn Chouest to provide towing, communications, supplies and researcher housing for the submarine.

In 1995, Dr. Robert Ballard — the man credited with discovering the Titanic wreckage — used the NR-1 and Chouest to explore the wreck of the HMHS Britannic. Sister ship to the Titanic, it was the third

and largest of the Olympic-class ocean liners, but it struck a mine and sank off the coast of Greece while serving as a hospital ship during World War I.

Chouest supported NR-1’s 2002 exploration of Monitor. Aided by Chouest, NR-1 conducted a full visual and sonar survey of Monitor that sank in 1862 and lay undiscovered until 1972.

NR-1’s powerful camera and sonar equipment took the closest image ever of the sunken vessel.

In 2007, NR-1 and Chouest, again working with Ballard, began mapping the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary in the Gulf of Mexico to help scientists

HISTORY

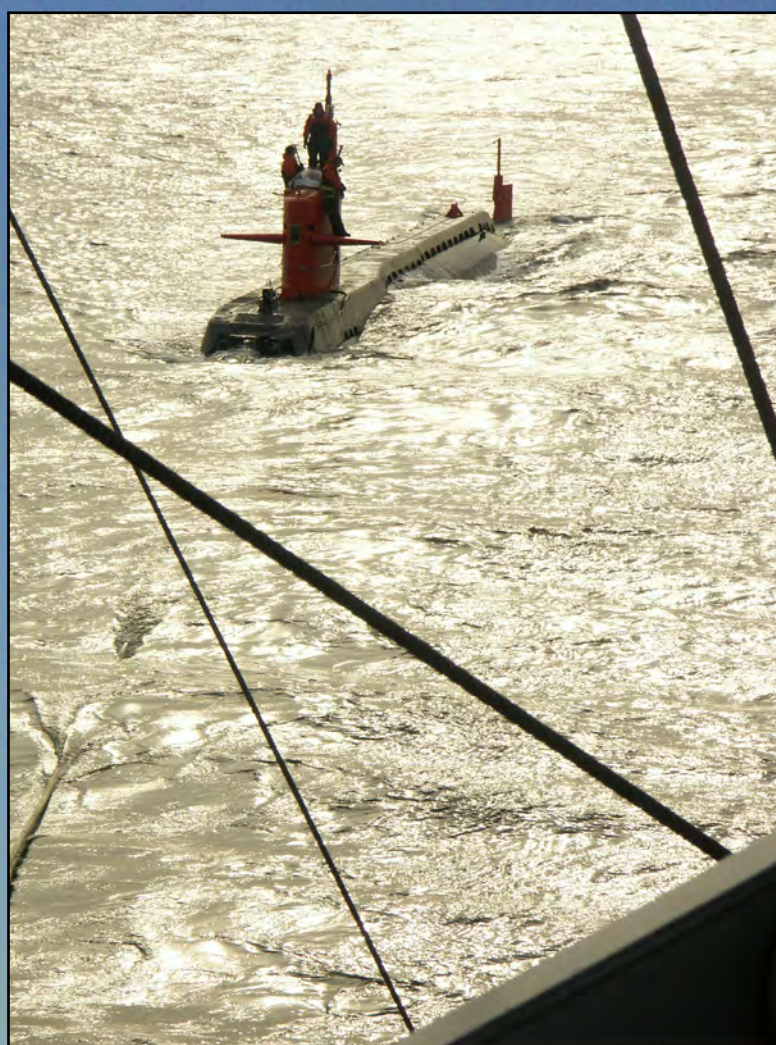
NR-1 farewell

determine where early Americans might have lived when, at the height of the last ice age, sea levels were nearly 400 feet lower than they are today.

Chouest completed its service to NR-1 Aug. 31, 2008, and was returned to its ship-operating company in September.

NR-1 will eventually go to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Wash., where it will be dismantled.

No matter how significant their accomplishments or unique their structure, like NR-1, many Navy vessels reach their final destination the same way — towed with pride by the crews of MSC ships.



Top: Rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp's Deck Machinist Joel Tano and Able Seaman Marlon Andries assist NR-1 crew members with the towline hookup.

Above: NR-1, being towed by Grasp, approaches Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Kittery, Maine.

Background: Grasp tows NR-1 leaving Groton, Conn.

Cover: NR-1 pulls into Submarine Base New London after completing its final scheduled deployment.



HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command headquarters employees donated or pledged 105 percent of the command's annual goal — a collective \$95,000 — to their choice of charities as part of this year's Combined Federal Campaign — the federal government's annual drive to raise funds for charity. Campaign manager Navy **Lt. Tim Hannen** and assistant campaign manager Navy **Yeoman 1st Class Dru Maclin** worked with representatives from each headquarters office to distribute and collect contribution forms, organize a silent auction and conduct two raffles. Special thanks go to the CFC committee representatives in each headquarters office: **Ron Wittingham**, inspector general's office; **Lea Delossantos**, council's office; Navy **Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Gregory Peck**, force medical;

Sandra Graham, public affairs; Navy **Chief Yeoman Angela Morrell**, reserve affairs; Navy **Lt. Lauren Zapf**, operations and plans; **David Anderson**, logistics; **David Lyle**, joint plans, strategic studies and wargaming; Navy **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Rodney Brown**, command, control, communications and computer systems; **John Goering**, engineering; **Linda Fitzpatrick**, comptroller's office; **John Quandt**, strategic planning; **Angela Miller**, contracts and business management; **Sandra Ortega**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force; **Louis Novak**, Special Mission Program; **Brian Kenney**, Prepositioning Program; and **Jean Muse**, Sealift Program.

Navy **Operations Specialist 1st Class Kevin Cammie**, operations and plans, was promoted from his rank

of petty officer 2nd class in a Jan. 8 frocking ceremony.

Five sailors from headquarters supported the presidential inauguration. Navy **Lt. Dan Sullivan**, flag aide, and Navy **Chief Yeoman Anthony Lane**, administrative support center, were each temporarily assigned to the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee. In addition, Navy **Yeoman 2nd Class Rebecca Williams**, Navy **Information Systems Technician 1st Class Damien Moore** and Navy **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Imamuddin Muhammad** were each selected by MSC to receive tickets to the Commander in Chief's Inaugural Ball — an honor recognizing their superior service. Williams and Moore have each been MSC Sailor of the Year, and Muhammad was deployed to U.S. Central Command as an individual augmentee.

MSC welcomes **Ryan Denton** and **Kristen Talbot**, Engineering; **Jack Roche**, Strategic Sealift and Prepositioning Program; **Tania Adames** and Navy **Operations Specialist 3rd Class Antonio Herring**, operations and plans; **Louis Novak**, Special Mission Program and **Larry Ross**, comptroller's office.

MSC bids farewell to **Shelley Wallace**, front office; **Wayne Wright**, counsel's office; **Angrean Barham**, administration support center; **Michelle Whitehead**, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Mary Brown** and Navy **Personnel Specialist 1st Class Felicia Brown**, maritime forces and manpower management; **Andrew Shaw** and **Matias Malig**, engineering; and Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Shavonda Famble**, Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Leticia Parker** and Navy **Lt. Tim O'Connell**, operations and plans.

COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command Director **Jack Taylor** visited MSFSC subordinate units in Japan, Guam and Singapore in December. While visiting Ship Support Unit Singapore, Taylor officiated an awards ceremony and presented a letter of appreciation to Navy **Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Shannon Taylor**; a quality-step increase to **Toots Edora**, logistics manager; and performance awards to **Doris Hughes**, financial analyst, **B.J. Goins**, port engineer, **Anh Ho**, port engineer, and **D.J. Koran**, fleet support logistics.

Navy **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Jamecia Robinson** was named MSFSC Sailor of the Quarter for the 4th quarter.

Frank Cunningham, MSFSC dry cargo/ammunition ship, or T-AKE, and combat stores ship class manager, hosted a T-AKE lessons-learned conference, in San Diego Dec. 10-11. Eighty people, including stakeholders from Military Sealift Command headquarters, MSFSC, SSU Singapore, Sealift Logistics Command Pacific, U. S. Pacific

Fleet, Program Executive Office Ships, Supervisor of Shipbuilding, General Dynamics NASSCO, and civil service masters and chief engineers were in attendance. The group discussed class issues, schedules, manning, training, ship loading, budgets and lessons

learned from USNS Alan Shepard and USNS Richard E. Byrd.

Fair winds and following seas to the following civil service mariners as they retire: **Chief Engineers Jeffrey Bartlett** and **Robert Miller**; **Second Assistant Engineer Robert Mitchell**, **Bostwain Everett Mumbower**; **Chief Cook Benjamin Bulatao**; **Yeoman Storekeeper Mario Tuyor**; **Steward Utilitymen David**

Burke, **Serafin Garcia** and **Virgilio Castro**; **Supply Officers Michael Mikula** and **Larry Harris**; **Junior Supply Officer Percival Ednalino**; **Second Electrician Angelito Francisco**; and **Chief Radio Electronic Technician Robert Hindman**.

For more news about MSFSC and civil service mariners, view the online newsletter at www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter.



Left to right: Simon Kuik, general manager (Operations) Sembawang Shipyard; Jack Taylor, director, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command; Ong Poh Kwee, managing director, Sembawang Shipyard; Rear Adm. Nora Tyson, commander, Logistics Group, Western Pacific; Capt. Larry Carley, master, USNS Walter S. Diehl; Navy Lt. Cmdr. Mike Little, commanding officer, Ship Support Unit Singapore; Wong Lee Lin, executive director, Sembawang Shipyard; and Navy Capt. Jim Romano, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Far East, gathered at the Terror Club in Singapore Dec. 16 for a luncheon held in honor of Taylor's visit.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Rear Adm. William H. Hilarides, Department of the Navy Research, Development and Acquisition program executive officer for submarines, sent a bravo zulu to the crew of Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS *Salvor* for its support during the testing of the chief of naval operations signal-analysis system project 1485. The crew's support of the mission resulted in a successful at-sea checkout of all hardware items.

The crew of MSC fleet ocean tug USNS *Navajo* received a bravo zulu from Deep Submergence Unit San Diego for *Navajo*'s support of deep submergence vehicle training evolutions

Dec. 17. *Navajo* provided a launch platform for the DSV, crane and rigging support, and launching and recovery operations during the exercise.

Dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS *Alan Shepard* received a special thank you — in the form of 115 pounds of homemade toffee — from the ship namesake's daughter, Laura Shepard Churchley. The toffee, made from a secret recipe of Churchley's mother and reported to be a favorite of *Alan Shepard*, was individually packaged and distributed to each mariner stationed aboard the ship as a thank you from the Shepard family.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS *Lewis and Clark*, fast combat support ship USNS *Supply*, and fleet replenishment oilers USNS *Laramie* and USNS *Tippecanoe* resupplied Navy combatant ships in the U.S. 5th Fleet operating area in support of maritime security operations, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in December.

Navy **Lt. Kristen Christensen**, force protection officer for Commander, Task Force 53, organized volunteers from the command to assist with the Bahrain Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals by walking dogs and social-

izing with them Dec. 19. The group walked more than 35 dogs and donated \$100 worth of kitty litter, dog food, toys and other items that the BSPCA needed. Due to the volunteer event's popularity and success, another group offered their assistance the following week.

Navy **Capt. Stephen Kelley**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Central welcomed Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Joel Harvey**, SEALOGCENT operations officer, who replaced Navy **Cmdr. Tim Rafferty**. Rafferty received the Meritorious Service Medal for his superior performance during his two years at SEALOGCENT.

EUROPE • NEWS

Military Sealift Command tanker USNS Lawrence H. Gianella loaded fuel Dec. 13-14 in St. Theodore, Greece. Gianella will deliver this fuel to Antarctica's McMurdo Station as part of

the annual re-supply mission Operation Deep Freeze.

MSC-chartered ship MV May off-loaded Navy Seabee cargo in Rota, Spain, Dec. 25-27. The ship loaded the

construction equipment and supplies in the West African island nation of Sao Tome and Principe in early December. The cargo had been used by Navy Seabees to conduct humanitarian aid projects in Sao Tome as a part of U.S. 6th Fleet's Theater Security Cooperation activities in Africa.

Dec. 18 Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS 2nd LT John P. Bobo hosted the Balearic Islands' Women in Security Conference while anchored off the coast of Palma de Mallorca, Spain. The event was organized by Palma de Mallorca's U.S. Consular Office and U.S. Embassy Madrid's Defense Attaché's Office. The event was hosted by MPS Squadron One commodore Navy Capt. Bill Sheehan and Bobo's civilian master Capt. Donald Pigott. More than 40 women from 12 local security, emergency and defense agencies visited Bobo for a ship tour and reception. The purpose of the visit was to provide the participants with a professional setting to discuss security issues. Attendees included the Balearic Islands' Minister of Homeland Security Maria Angeles Lecinena and the Balearic Islands' Director of Emergency Management Cristina Ferrer.

MPS Squadron One bid fair winds and following seas to operations officer, Navy **Chief Warrant Officer Kirk Wilson**, and supply officer, Navy **Ensign Aaron Thornton**. The squadron welcomed aboard Wilson's and Thornton's reliefs, Navy **Chief Warrant Officer Tim Hartman**, reporting from Afloat Training Group, Mayport, Fla.; and Navy **Ensign Michael Molnar**, reporting from the Navy Supply School, Athens, Ga.



Photo by Darryl E. Atwood

Women attending the Balearic Islands' Women in Security Conference held aboard Maritime Prepositioning Ship 2nd LT John P. Bobo receive a briefing upon arrival. The conference was hosted by MPS Squadron One Commander Navy Capt. Bill Sheehan.

ATLANTIC • LINES

Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic completed its move from building Z-101 to building R-52, both located at Naval Station Norfolk, Va., in December. The former location had been home to the command since December 1999. SEALOGLANT's new home, previously occupied by Military Sealift Fleet Support Command, offers most of the employees larger, more private working spaces.

Richard Bolduc, SEALOGLANT representative in Jacksonville, Fla., re-

ported that Military Sealift Command tanker USNS Richard G. Matthiesen discharged about 215,000 barrels of petroleum at the Florida ports of Port Everglades, Tampa and Jacksonville in the first half of December. MSC combat stores ship USNS Saturn received stores and bunkers in Jacksonville Dec. 3-6. Large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Mendonca and MSC-chartered ship SS Westward Venture discharged cargo in Jacksonville in December. During Mendonca's

port visit in Jacksonville, Bolduc arranged a ship tour for U.S. Transportation Command's director of operations and plans, U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Michael Gould.

In Charleston, S.C., **Tom D'Agostino**, SEALOGLANT representative there, assisted large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Soderman in discharging 840 pieces of cargo returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom Dec. 14-17.

Terry Smith, SEALOGLANT marine transportation specialist in Port Canaveral, supported MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp during its

brief visit Dec. 17-18 while the vessel was supporting a Navy special operations exercise.

The long-term charter tug T/B Megan Beyel/MOBRO 1210 loaded equipment and supplies at Port Canaveral Dec. 30 in support of the Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center located at Andros Island, Bahamas.

SEALOGLANT welcomes Navy **Lt. Bradley Loftis**, antiterrorism force protection team. Loftis, an F/A-18C jet pilot and former U.S. Navy Seal, comes to the command from the Naval Safety Center where he was an analyst.

FAR • EAST • HAILS



U.S. Navy photo by Edward Baxter

Navy Capt. Jim Romano, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Far East, pins a Navy Commendation Medal on outgoing Military Sealift Command Office Diego Garcia commanding officer Navy Lt. Cmdr. Omar Jana on Dec. 16.

Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Paul Springer** relieved Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Omar Jana** as commanding officer of Military Sealift Command's office on Diego Garcia Dec. 18. Springer reported to the Indian Ocean island after a deployment in Afghanistan. Jana is heading for a one-year assignment with multinational forces in Iraq.

Navy **Capt. Jim Romano**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Far East visited Diego Garcia to present Jana with a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal Dec. 16 before Jana left for his next assignment. Romano recognized Jana for managing ships that delivered 76 million gallons of fuel and more than 78,000 metric tons of supplies to support Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron

Two ships, the Naval Support Facility and other tenant commands on the island.

During the same ceremony, Romano presented Navy **Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate Heath Breden** with a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, recognizing his outstanding tour of duty as the command's operations officer since January 2008.

Navy **Chief Warrant Officer Charles Briggs**, who served with SEALOGFE since March 2006, departed for his next assignment as operations officer at Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two. Navy **Ensign Casey Hebert** relieved Navy **Ensign Wade Jones** as the MPS Squadron Two supply officer.

From the MSC office on the Korean peninsula, commanding officer Navy **Cmdr. Chris Cruz** and the staff of MSCO Korea hosted the 55th annual Miewon Orphanage holiday party at the United Seamen's Service Center in Busan Dec. 2. The event included magicians, a balloon artist and gifts for the children. MSCO Korea and the center raise private funds throughout the year to provide heating oil, food, clothing and toys to the orphanage. MSCO Korea's relationship with the orphanage dates back to 1954.

MSCO Korea joined the U.S. Army's 837th Transportation Battalion to co-host the annual Pier Eight holiday party in Busan Dec. 5. Attendees included members from more than 12 tenant commands who call Pier Eight home, as well as representatives from the local community, including the Busan Navy League, Korean American Busan Association, Korean American Partnership Association, and the Daedong Scholarship Association. The guest speaker was Army Brig. Gen. Thomas Harvey, deputy commander, 8th U.S. Army and deputy commander, U.S. Forces Korea (Advanced Element).

From Japan, MSCO Okinawa's commanding officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Alexander Soe** hosted an annual appreciation luncheon Dec. 4 at Okinawa's United Seamen's Service Center to honor local commands and agencies that support MSC operations on the island. Guests of honor included Navy Capt. Michael Vizcarra, commander, Fleet Activities Okinawa, and Army Col. James E. Woodard, commander, 10th Support Group, along with numerous Okinawa-based U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Air Force personnel and representatives from the commercial port of Naha.

MSC buys prepositioning ships

By Mike Neuhardt
Prepositioning Program &
Trish Larson
MSC Public Affairs

When to buy? When to lease? Many of us weigh those options as we face the prospect of acquiring a new car.

On a much larger scale, Military Sealift Command has faced those questions as more than a dozen Maritime Prepositioning Ships, all under 25-year charter by MSC in support of the U.S. Marine Corps, have neared the ends of their charter contracts in recent years.

Since 2006, one by one, MSC has exercised options contained in the original chartering contracts to buy seven MPS — a strong testimony to the high value that Marines place on these rapid-response ships that greatly improve the mobility and flexibility of U.S. armed forces around the world.

Today, 15 MPS — both government-owned and chartered — operate in three squadrons to provide support for Marine Corps first-responders around the world. These civilian-crewed, noncombatant ships strategically place about 2 million square feet of Marine Corps equipment and supplies at sea, enabling warfighting gear to be moved ashore quickly as Marines are flown into theaters of operation. Each MPS squadron of five or six ships carries enough equipment and supplies to support a Marine Expeditionary Brigade numbering between 14,000 and 17,000 Marines, plus a lesser number of Naval Support Element personnel for 30 days of combat operations.

In January's latest round of contract buy-outs, MSC acquired three MPS that were previously under long-term charter to MSC from private companies. With this procurement, the ships acquired a USNS prefix, highlighting their United States Naval Ship status and ownership by the U.S. government. The three newly purchased ships, along with four others, bring MSC's inventory of MPS buy-out ships to seven.

The newest government-owned MPS include USNS MAJ Stephen W. Pless, USNS SGT Matej Kocak and USNS SGT William R. Button. In 2006 and 2007, MSC exercised options to buy USNS PFC Dewayne T. Williams, USNS 1st LT Jack Lummus, USNS 1st LT Baldomero Lopez and USNS 2nd LT John P. Bobo. The chartered SS PFC Eugene A. Obregon is also being considered for contract buy-out in 2010.

"Buying these unique and time-tested ships at this point in time offers MSC

the most economically and operationally advantageous means of meeting the ongoing Maritime Prepositioning Force mission," said Keith Bauer, MSC's prepositioning technical director. "Government ownership of the MPS allows us to keep ships with significant government utility available to the Department of Defense."

The Near Term Prepositioning Force: Prepo's beginning

MSC's transition from chartering MPS to buying MPS spans nearly three decades. In the early 1980s, the concept of a Maritime Prepositioning Force, or MPF, began with a fleet of seven MSC-operated ships that sailed for Diego Garcia. This newly established ship force — quickly assembled at the direction of DOD and comprising both chartered and government-owned ships — was designated the Near Term Prepositioning Force, or NTPF.

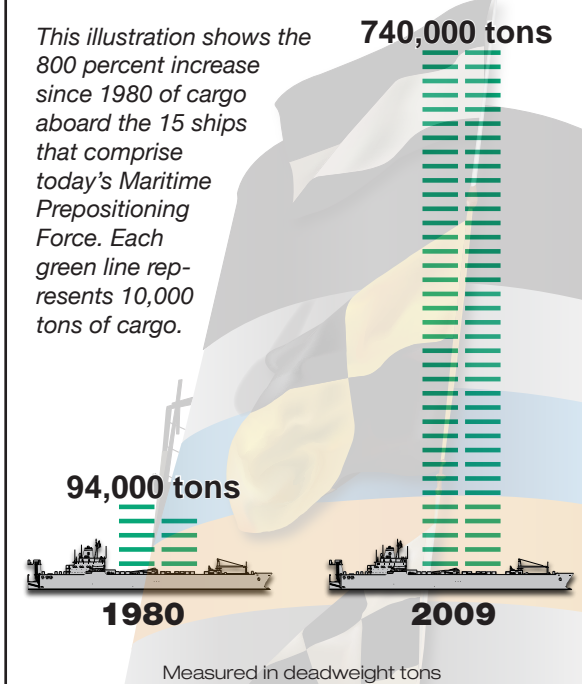
NTPF ships were loaded with rolling stock and supplies tailored for Marine Corps, Army and Air Force combat operations. Storing the equipment afloat, and eventually aboard ships capable of moving the gear instream "across the beach," made the initially required, high-priority combat equipment readily available. This concept also ensured easy mobility between operating areas anywhere in the world — with or without host-nation support or infrastructure.

During the first deployment of the NTPF, work continued within the Navy to acquire ships designed to meet longer-term Marine Corps requirements. Eventually, 13 MPS were delivered to the Navy between 1984 and 1986. All of these ships were chartered from private companies under 25-year contracts that included provisions permitting the ships' purchase by Navy during the charter period. MPS cargo holds were designed to accommodate then-current Marine Corps equipment sets along with supplies, food, medical equipment, fuel and water. The ships' weather decks were loaded with floating lighterage and hose-reel systems that permitted all of the ship's dry cargo, water and fuel to be discharged offshore.

With the original chartering of MPS in the 1980s, the Navy realized cost and time savings — rapidly deploying ships with modern commercial features along

Maritime Prepositioning Force

This illustration shows the 800 percent increase since 1980 of cargo aboard the 15 ships that comprise today's Maritime Prepositioning Force. Each green line represents 10,000 tons of cargo.



U.S. Navy photo Illustration by Susan Thomas

with installed military capabilities, on time and within budget. Chartering instead of purchasing also gave the Navy flexibility — ensuring a good match of ships against requirements as missions and cargoes changed over time.

Beginning in 2000, MSC acquired three government-owned Maritime Prepositioning Force (Enhanced) ships. These ships were specially designed and loaded with Marine Corps equipment and supplies based on lessons learned from the first Gulf war in the early 1990s. The acquisition of these new ships, plus the original 13 MPS, combined to create a 16-ship MPF in support of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Today's MPS: An enduring mission

Over the years, MPS support for U.S. military operations has been critical, and these ships have highlighted the pivotal role of at-sea prepositioning in the nation's defense.

Within days of the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the MPS were among the first ships deployed to Southwest Asia for Operation Desert Shield. Using MPS gear, the initial battalion of the 7th Marine Expeditionary Brigade was combat-ready within four days of the arrival of the MPS.

The MPS continued to be a cornerstone for U.S. and allied forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom beginning in 2003. In addition, the MPS have repeatedly been used to support humanitarian assistance operations — in the

Philippines aiding victims of a volcano; in Guam following a hurricane; in the Western Pacific in the wake of a tsunami; and in Somalia aiding citizens in crisis with food and water.

The MPS have increased the effectiveness and efficiency of the nation's warfighting operations in recent decades. The ships have reduced the need for equipment to be based on land for forward-deployed, ground-based Marines. In addition, the MPS concept has lessened the demand for scarce strategic sealift to move equipment and supplies into an operating area. When required, Marines fly into operating areas and marry up with equipment and supplies, which are positioned close to potential contingency sites.

Bauer noted that while the number and composition of ships within the MPF has undergone some changes over the years, the at-sea-storage capacity has

grown significantly. Since 1980, the volume of afloat prepositioning cargo aboard MSC ships has expanded by nearly 800 percent — from about 94,000 deadweight tons then to nearly 740,000 deadweight tons today.

A Navy/Marine Corps restructuring plan currently being implemented that will add several ships to the MPF over the next two years — bridging capability until new Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) ships begin to be delivered in 2011.

Under this interim plan, newly fielded ships including three government-owned large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ships, a container ship and a tanker are being added to keep up with the increasing size of ground equipment to support the fleet Marine.

Bauer indicated that until the MPF(F) is fielded, the number of Marine Corps-dedicated prepositioning ships will remain about the same, but the capability from those ships will expand.

"Whether measured by increased square feet of cargo, more containers or more gallons of jet fuel, the capacity of the ships we're adding in the next two years will transform the program," said Bauer. "Our Maritime Prepositioning Force is key to meeting the Marine Corps' mission requirements, and MSC can be justifiably proud of its integral role in the operation of these ships — both the chartered vessels and the government-owned ships."

Operation Deep Freeze underway

By Sarah Burford
SEALOGPAC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command-chartered dry cargo ship MV American Tern departed Port Hueneme, Calif., Jan. 2, in support of Operation Deep Freeze, an annual MSC mission to replenish the National Science Foundation's McMurdo Station in Antarctica.

American Tern arrived at the California port in December. The ship loaded nearly 5.5 million pounds of cargo, including food, scientific equipment, medical supplies, construction materials and mail before departing for its 8,000-mile journey to Antarctica, which would include another stop in California and stops in New Zealand, to take on fuel and more supplies.

According to Larry Larsson, MSC representative to McMurdo Station, providing supplies to the nearly

1,500 researchers and support personnel who live at McMurdo Station is a significant mission for MSC.

"We as a team are supporting the scientists who are studying things like what causes global warming and how we can stop it," said Larsson. "MSC ships provide nearly all the supplies and fuel needed to keep these scientists going through the winter. Without us, keeping Operation Deep Freeze going would become extremely difficult."

Weather conditions have traditionally impacted the mission. In years past, harsh weather, temperatures that drop below 0 degrees Fahrenheit and ice flows have posed significant challenges. As a result of lessons learned from past Operation Deep Freeze missions, the planners have incorporated the National Ice Center in this year's mission.

"They have provided us with ice forecasts and conditions and have helped us develop a better idea of

working with these factors instead of against them to ensure a smooth evolution," said Larsson.

American Tern will join MSC-owned tanker USNS Lawrence H. Gianella in New Zealand. Gianella will provide fuel not only for McMurdo Station but also to Swedish ice-breaker Oden, which has been working in the icy waters surrounding McMurdo to carve out a path for American Tern and Gianella.

American Tern is scheduled to return to Port Hueneme in early March. The ship will bring back retro-grade materials and ice core samples taken as part of the scientific studies. The cores will be used in further studies of the atmosphere and global warming trends.

MSC has been a part of yearly resupply operations since McMurdo Station was established in 1955. MSC is responsible for delivering about 70 percent of the dry cargo and 100 percent of fuel that is taken to Antarctica each year.